1:Heckewelder M-5 (ca. 1800)1819
NM7 Delaware NM7

from ice, must be an obstacle to the hunter, when in pursuit of a wounded deer, bear, or other animal, as is often the case. Nor has he then leisure to think on the state of his body, and to consider whether his blood is not too much heated to plunge without danger into the cold stream, since the game he is in pursuit of is running off from him with full speed. Many dangerous accidents often befal him, both as a hunter and a warrior, (for he is both) and are seldom unattended with painful consequences, such as rheumatism or consumption of the lungs, for which the sweat-house, on which they so much depend, and to which they often resort for relief, especially after a fatiguing hunt or warlike excursion, is not always a sure preservative or an effectual remedy.

The husband generally leaves the skins and peltry which he has procured by hunting to the care of his wife, who sells or barters them away to the best advantage for such necessaries as are wanted in the family; not forgetting to supply her husband with what he stands in need of, who, when he receives it from her hands never fails to return her thanks in the kindest manner. If debts had been previously contracted, either by the woman, or by her and her husband jointly, or if a horse should be wanted, as much is laid aside as will be sufficient to pay the debts or purchase the horse.

When a woman has got in her harvest of corn, it is considered as belonging to her husband, who, if he has suffering friends, may give them as much of it as he pleases, without consulting his wife, or being afraid of her being displeased; for she is in the firm belief that he is able to procure that article whenever it is wanted. The sugar which she makes out of the maple tree is also considered as belonging to her husband.

There is nothing in an Indian's house or family without its particular owner. Every individual knows what belongs to him, from the horse or cow down to the dog, cat, kitten and little chicken.

1:Heckewelder M-5 (ca. 1800)1819
NM7 Delaware NM7

very aged men and women were seen among them, some of whom thought they had lived about one hundred years. They frequently told me and others that when they were young men, their people did not marry so early as they did since, that even at twenty they were called boys and durst not wear a breech-cloth, as the men did at that time, but had only a small bit of a skin hanging before them. Neither, did they say, were they subject to so many disorders as in later times, and many of them calculated on dying of old age. But since that time a great change has taken place in the constitution of those Indians who live nearest to the whites. By the introduction of ardent spirits among them, they have been led into vices which have brought on disorders which they say were unknown before; their blood became corrupted by a shameful complaint, which the Europeans pretend to have received from the original inhabitants of America, while these say they had never known or heard of it until the Europeans came among them. Now the Indians are infected with it to a great degree; children frequently inherit it from their parents, and after lingering for a few years at last die victims to this poison.

Those Indians who have not adopted the vices of the white people live to a good age, from 70 to 90. Few arrive at the age of one hundred years. The women, in general, live longer than the men.

The Indians do not appear to be more or less exempt than the whites from the common infirmities of old age. I have known old men among them who had lost their memory, their sight, and their teeth. I have also seen them at eighty in their second childhood and not able to help themselves.

The Indian women are not in general so prolific as those of the white race. I imagine this defect is owing to the vicious and dissolute life they lead since the introduction of spirituous liquors. Among our Christian Indians, we have had a couple who had been

1:Heckewelder M-5 (ca. 1800)1819
NM7 Delaware NM7

converted for thirty years and had always led a regular life, and who had thirteen children. Others had from six to nine. In general, however, the Indians seldom have more than four or five children.

The Indian children, generally, continue two years at the breast, and there are instances of their sucking during four years. Mothers are very apt to indulge their last child, children in this respect enjoy the same privilege alike.

I have never heard of any nation or tribe of Indians who destroyed their children, when distorted or deformed, whether they were so born or came to be so afterwards. I have on the contrary seen very particular care taken of such children. Nor have I ever been acquainted with any Indians that made use of artificial means to compress or alter the natural shape of the heads of their children, as some travellers have, I believe, pretended.

The disorders to which the Indians are most commonly subjected are pulmonary consumptions, fluxes, fevers and severe rheumatisms, all proceeding probably from the kind of life they lead, the hardships they undergo, and the nature of the food that they take. Intermitting and bilious fevers set in among them regularly in the autumn, when their towns are situated near marshy grounds or ponds of stagnant water, and many die in consequence of them. I have observed that these fevers generally make their first appearance in the season of the wild plum, a fruit that the Indians are particularly fond of. Sometimes also after a famine or long suffering for want of food, when they generally make too free an use of green maize, squashes and other watery vegetables. They are also subject to a disease which they call the *yellow vomit*, which, at times, carries off many of them. They generally die of this disease on the second or third day after the first attack.

Their old men are very subject to rheumatisms in the back and knees; I have known them at the age of 50 or

1:Heckewelder M-5 (ca. 1800)1819
NM7 Delaware NM7

60 to be laid up for weeks and months at a time on this account, and I have seen boys 10 and 12 years of age, who through colds or fits of sickness had become so contracted that they never afterwards recovered the use of their limbs. 164

Worms are a very common disorder among Indian children, and great numbers of them die from that cause. They eat a great deal of green corn when in the milk, with beans, squashes, melons and the like; their bellies become remarkably large, and it is probably in that manner that the worms are generated. I rather think that Indian children suffer less in teething than the whites.

The gout, gravel, and scrophula or king's evil, are not known among the Indians. Nor have I ever known any one that had the disorder called the *Rickets*. Consumptions are very frequent among them since they have become fond of spirituous liquors, and their young men in great numbers fall victims to that complaint. A person who resides among them may easily observe the frightful decrease of their numbers from one period of ten years to another. Our vices have destroyed them more than our swords.

CHAPTER XXIX.

REMEDIES.

THE *Materia Medica* of the Indians consists of various roots and plants known to themselves, the properties of which they are not fond of disclosing to strangers. They make considerable use of the barks of trees, such 757 278

2:Newcomb E-4, 5 (1951-1952) 1956
NM7 Delaware NM7

Susquehannock burned a Delaware town and killed "ninety men" as well as women and children.[70] Lindestrom in 1654 mentioned that both the Delawares and the Swedes were suffering from illness and that the natives were blaming the Swedes for sickness and death.[71] Mooney said:

> As early as 1677 the Delawares accused the whites of having brought the smallpox among them, and in a council at Burlington, New Jersey, their speaker stated that it had already ravaged the tribe three times — in his grandfather's time, in his father's time, and in his own time. One of these visitations was probably that of 1637-1638, which swept all the region from the Chesapeake Bay to Lake Huron. Another was probably the same noted as ravaging the Conestoga in 1661-1663.[72]

Pastorius in a letter written in 1694 said:

> A great many of these savages have died, even since I came here, so that there are hardly more than a fourth part of the number now existing that were to be seen when I came to the country ten years ago.[73]

Denton as early as 1670 was able to say of the results of Indian contact with Europeans:

> ... it is to be admired how strangely they [i.e., Indians] have decreast by the Hand of God since the English first settling of these parts; for since my time, when there were six towns, they are reduced to two small villages, & it has been generally observed that where the English come to settle, a Divine Hand makes way for them, by removing or cutting off the *Indians*, either by wars one with the other, or by some raging mortal disease.[74]

Kalm seems to have summed it up accurately when he remarked in the eighteenth century:

> ... as the Europeans proceeded to cultivate the land, the Indians sold their land, and went further into the country. But in reality few of the Indians really left the country in this manner; most of them ended their days before, either by wars among themselves, or by the small-pox ... it has killed incredible numbers of them .... But brandy is said to have killed most of the Indians.[75]

These scattered statements leave no room to doubt that the population decline of the Delawares in the seventeenth century was tremendous. There are two important factors to keep in mind concerning the early population and the subsequent depopulation. First, even if the estimates of the population in 1600 are grossly low, the population density in pre-Columbian times was surprisingly low considering the nature of the habitat and the capacity of the natives' technological system. The reasons for the low population density are discussed later. Second, the depopulation during the seventeenth century was a contributory factor in the ultimate appearance of the Delaware tribe. The emergence of the tribe is treated more fully under Acculturation.

---

[70] De Vries, 1857, p. 39.
[71] Lindestrom, 1925, pp. 127-28.
[72] Mooney, 1911, p. 333.
[73] Pastorius, 1912, p. 426.
[74] Denton, 1845, p. 6.
[75] Kalm, 1937, I: 258-59.

3: Zeisberger M-5 (1767-1780)1910
NM7 Delaware NM7

sistency of a strong lye stops the flow of blood when applied to a fresh wound, even though an artery may have been ruptured, prevents swelling and heals the wound rapidly. After this solution has been used for one or two days other roots must be applied, such as the great sassaparilla and others that have healing powers.

Epilepsy is not very common among the Indians. It does not often happen that an Indian becomes mad, and madness among these people is not as violent as among the whites, probably, for the reason that they are not possessed of equal power with the whites, and even their bodies are weaker because they have not the abundance and variety of nourishing food. Blood letting is supposed to help the epileptics.

Of small-pox they knew nothing until some of them caught the contagion from the Europeans. Most of them died before the small-pox properly appeared. They are much inclined to boils and sores. Upon these they lay a warm poultice made of the flour of Indian corn; when the boils are ripe they are lanced. Broken arms and legs they are able to set very well, though limbs are not broken often, dislocated joints they are also able to correct. If an Indian has dislocated his foot or knee, when hunting alone, he creeps to the next tree and tying one end of his strap to it, fastens the other to the dislocated limb and, lying on his back, continues to pull until it is reduced. For tooth-ache the Indians use roots also, placing a little piece in the hollow tooth, which sometimes affords relief though not always. Sometimes teeth are extracted if a pair of pincers can be secured. It is not for lack of skill but for lack of proper instruments that they do not treat external injuries more successfully. Such instruments as they have are not used in the most careful manner. If one who is being operated on cries out, those present laugh. Misfortunes of almost any kind trouble them little; if house and goods have been burned, the unfortunate owners may even relate the experience in a humorous manner.

Many of them suffer from diarrhoea, particularly, in the fall of the year. The evil is aggravated because they know nothing of dieting and continue to eat whatever they wish. For

8: Lindeström T-5 (1654-1655) 1925
NM7 Delaware NM7

CHAPTER XXIV.

Concerning the Ailments, Wonderful Medicines, Tyranny, Blood-Letting and Patience of the American Indians.

These savages are by nature a healthy people and are rarely subjected to diseases, before death surprises them, or if it may happen that some contagious disease should come into the country, through which whole nations could die out, as has happened formerly among them here.

The French disease[1] sometimes indeed rages among the savages, because they live in such unchastity and adultery, like irrational brutes; but against this they have a white kind of ointment, and cure themselves, after which it goes its way, as though it were wiped away by the hand.

Whoever is wounded by the poisonous rattlesnake and is not cured and treated by the medical doctor of the savages, who is called the devil-chaser,[2] then there is no hope for the life of that patient any more, but he must die; for the savages have such splendid medicine against it,[3] that they immediately drive away the poison with it and cure it. For this purpose they use a kind of grass

[1] *Morbus fransman.* Cf. Williams, *Key*, 158. See also *London Chronicle*, Oct. 6, 1757; Peter Kalm, *Journal; Mss. 1§12 Yi, Ridgway Library.* For their remedies, see further Van der Donck, De Vries, *Vertoogh*, etc., *N. Y. Col.*, 2, I, 156; II, 269, etc.; Heckewelder, *Indian Nations*, 224 ff.; Speck, *Med. Prac. of the North. Algon., Proceed.* of the *Nine. Int. Cong.* of *Ams.* (1917), 303 ff. They even understood the value of mineral water.

[2] *Dyfueliagaren.*

[3] That is: the poison of the rattle snake.

26. Moral superintendence of Supreme Being over worshipers		−	(+)		+	+	+	−	+	+	+		776
27. Pray to Him for favors or assistance	+	−	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		782
28. Deposit tobacco on stones, mountains, etc. for favors					+	+	+	+	+	+	+		775
29. Tobacco sacrificed for success in hunting	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		743
30. Believe in a future state of punishments and rewards	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		754
31. Final judgment						+	+	+	+	+	+		794
32. Mental or corporeal pleasures in future state of existence		+		+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		164
33. Judgment immediately after death		+?				+	+	+	+	+	• +		●
34. Souls of worthy go to place of happiness or abode of Supreme Being	+	+		+		+	+	+	+	+	+		
35. Souls of bad go to land of bad spirits or hell						+	+	−	+	+	−		
left on earth or no good place	+	+		+		+		−	+	+	−		
36. Tortured or unhappy in either place		+		+		+		−	+	+	•		
37. Direction of habitation of good souls	SW	S		S		Up	S	•	Up	Up	W & Up	Up	
bad souls						Up	•	•	Up		Up	Up	
38. Believe in ghosts		+		+		+	+	−	+	+	+	S	
39. Have priests	+	+		−		−	−	−	−	−	−	−	
40. Witches and wizards		+		+	+	+	+	−	+	+	+	+	
41. National worshiping society †				+	+	+	+	−	+				
Medicine													
42. Diseases to which peculiarly liable †													
Bowel disorders				+	+	+			+		+	−	
Consumption					+				+	−	−	+	
Pleurisy						+			−		+		
Chills and fevers	+			+	+			+	+	+	+	+	
Dysentery				+					−		+		
Rheumatism				+	+				+	−	• +	−	
Boils				+					+		−		
43. Remedies usually roots and herbs	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	
44. Bleeding common			+	+	+	+		+	+	−	+	+	
45. Cupping common				+					−		−	−	
46. Sweating common	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	
47. Medical profession	+	−	+	+	+	−		+	−	−	+	−	
48. Receive any education													
49. Called by divine agency in youth									+	+	−	−	
50. Count pulse									+	+	−	−	
51. Inquire into nature of complaint						−			+	+	+	+	

343 755 756 757

9: Kinietz E-4, 5 (1938) 1946
NM7 Delaware NM7

A cogent reason for the survival of religious beliefs of the Delaware was the vehicle by which they were transmitted from generation to generation, the national worshiping society or Big House. The reaction to the introduction of white ways expressed itself in the integration of a number of original ceremonies. Some Christian elements were unconsciously incorporated along the way, but these were principally modifications of, rather than substitutes for, native concepts. The accounts of the national worshiping society given by John Johnston and Captain Pipe are included in the section of ethnographic notes.[1] I have discussed some of the changes in the ceremony itself during historic times in another article.[2]

Medicines

The information on the ailments prevalent at the time of first contact with the whites is very limited. Williams indicates that chills and fevers and toothaches were the most common disturbances to the health of the Narragansets. He and Lindeström mention plagues and the French disease among the Indians of their time. Smallpox was a plague for which Williams gave a native name. From their lack of resistance to many diseases prevalent in Europe, it has often been postulated that the Indians had not been exposed to them before white contact. The evidence compiled in this study neither proves nor disproves this assumption, although, of course, the modern informants say that in ancient times the Indians were very healthy and had no ills until the white man introduced them. This is in accord with the principle of former good times that is universal in its application.

Changes between early and late periods show up in two elements but are open to question as to the reliability of interpretation of the early information. First, Zeisberger, alone of the authors of the sources, reported cupping in practice among the Delaware (45). This was denied by all the modern informants although cupping by sucking was known among other tribes.

[1] See *post*, pp. 93-97.

[2] Kinietz, Vernon, "European Civilization as a Determinant of Native Indian Customs," in *American Anthropologist*, N. S. XLII(1940), 116-21.

9: Kinietz E-4, 5 (1938) 1946
NM7 Delaware NM7

During the intervals between the songs, or at least once every night, the principal rises from his seat and calls before him six or twelve persons (male) (generally the latter number) from the worshipers. He then delivers to the male servants a quantity of wampum in strings, corresponding to the number of persons called. With these the servants precede the chosen, who go out of the lodge and with their faces turned to the east, seat themselves upon their hams and commence a kind of howl, which they repeat in the same tone twelve times. They then return to the lodge with great solemnity, and take their places as usual. —As a kind of relaxation from the severer duties of the worship, these chosen men are directed by the principal to scatter a quantity of wampum in grains, upon the ground within the lodge. This is for the benefit of the servants, who are obliged to stand upon one leg and take it up with the thumb and finger, a slow method, affording amusement to the spectators. But this only occurs at the close of the night's worship and would be considered improper at any other time. Dancing is sometimes practiced at these assemblages and besides the employment of relating their dreams they are frequently addressed by the old men in exhortations to preserve these customs in their purity, to prolong their own existence by continuing the meetings, and to adore the author, the Great spirit.

Medicine

42. Diseases

To the list on the table Roger Williams adds toothache as one of the greatest afflictions of the Indians (Narragansets); J. W., mumps; W. L., small pox. E. R. said that rheumatism was introduced only recently.

54. Juggling tricks.

The so-called juggling tricks were used only when the patient was dangerously ill, according to John Johnston. These tricks, according to J. W., W. T., and W. L., were used only by the sweat doctors in diagnosing a complaint.

D 291 177 materials. Some of them had on two shawls, and some a third arranged as a neck drape. They appeared to have put on all they had, to show it, the quantity of dress being of more importance in their sight than its style, or quality.

Of course their appearance as a whole was fantastic and ludicrous. The dresses were made without taste from scant patterns, and worn without hoops or petticoats, thus giving to the skirt an appearance not to be compared for a moment with the Indian female skirt of cloth and blanket of the same, but these would be too warm for Kansas. I was glad to see the gown upon them, as it is a move in the right direction. At home they may wear the Indian gown, but I doubt it. The Shawnee women, all that I saw, wore the gown. On their heads they tie a silk handkerchief universally. I did not see a bonnet among them.

S [291]

D 142 144 The color of the Indian women is quite uniform, and is light. It shows that the white blood infused into them in the East has been well diffused throughout. The next cross with the white will make a pretty white child, of which I saw a few and but a few specimens, as the Delawares are quite vigorous against intermarriage with the whites, and also against unlawful intercourse. As a whole, the expression on the face of the women was pleasant and healthful. They look strong, literally cleanly and healthy, although I am told by Mr. Ford that syphilis is among their women to an alarming extent. Their faces would not lead to such a suspicion.

D [563]

D 142

D [164]

D 291 The men were more fantastically dressed than the women, and did not appear half as well. Their fancy dresses were cheap and absurd, rendering their general appearance ridiculous. There were many good faces among them, and also well dressed Indians

D [191]